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'Survivor' having fun being a fan

By JUAN RODRIGUEZ
of The Gazette

'Survivor' is the appropriate title of Randy Bachman's first solo album since leaving rock group Bachman-Turner-Overdrive a year and a half ago.

The album chronicles the career of a rock star who has been through the ups and the downs — from being a kid playing in garages and listening to the radio, to playing concerts in front of a "no-show crowd," to the glory days when his name is emblazoned on a marquee.

Then there's a song about Bachman's sudden retirement ("So many things to stay home for, Wife and children by the fireside") and, the finale, 'Survivor' which proclaims himself ready willing and able to do it all over again.

The 35-year-old guitarist was in town recently to promote the record, like all dutiful rock people. What has Randy been doing over the past year?

"I've been going to concerts to see what it's like to be a fan again — buying my own tickets, cheering with the crowd, and trying to get backstage but being unable to. It's been fun, it's given me a whole new perspective on the rock 'n' roll business."

Bachman had 40 songs to choose from before settling on eight autobiographical numbers.

He teamed up with former Guess Who cohort Burton Cummings for 'Survivor' — proof that the well-publicized spat between the two, resulting in Bachman leaving that group at the height of its popularity, is part of the past.

"Things that bothered us then don't anymore: We've both matured a lot," Bachman said.

"I wanted to use Burton's bass player (Ian Gardiner) and since Burton was in Los Angeles cooling out for three months, he asked if he could contribute some piano and vocals. It worked out beautifully, much like the old feelings we used to have when we first started out."

Burly, fuzzy-haired Bachman says he's proud of the reaction other rock stars have accorded 'Survivor.'

"I played it for Peter Frampton and Steve Miller and, to a word, they both said 'Hey, that's the story of my life'."

Life as a rock star is a risky business, notes Bachman.

"A lot of young bands can't handle success, it goes to their heads. They suddenly have $300,000 in their hands and go and blow it on drugs and partying. Why? Because they have nothing to come home to.

"As for myself, when I leave the stage and the studio, I go home to a perfectly straight home life. I help my wife with the housework, I have my kids and I have my religion (Mormon). These are the things that've made me a survivor.

"On the other hand, take the case of Elton John. He was on top of the world but went home to an empty house.

"He had problems with his sexual identity and it almost cost him his life. Then he quit the road and got himself together by buying a losing soccer team to try and build it into a first rate outfit. From what I've heard, it's done wonders for him."

Besides being an exceptionally well-produced record, 'Survivor' is, in Bachman's words, "like an education in this business. I hope people enjoy it as rock but also learn something from it, too."

Gazette, George Cree

Randy Bachman: Home keeps him straight

Writer turns rocker

Garbage, crickets make for punk

ROCK & POP
By Juan Rodriguez

"If those guys can do it, so can I," said culture critic-writer Richard Meltzer upon seeing a punk rock group, the Weasels, playing at Hollywood's Whiskey Club.

And so the writer, who had written songs for the Blue Oyster Cult, has joined forces with a Warner Brothers publicist and other friends to form a punk group called Vom.

And although they have played only one paying performance, Vom has been getting its share of publicity, thank's to Meltzer's lengthy analysis of the genesis of the group in a special 24-page Punk Insert in New York's influential 'Village Voice,' as well as a recent write-up in the Random Notes section of 'Rolling Stone.'

The 33-year-old Meltzer is without doubt the most prolific of rock writers, having authored the classic tome 'The Aesthetics of Rock' (1969) and 'Gulcher' and having written for everyone from 'Rolling Stone,' the 'Voice,' 'Creem,' to skin-mags like 'Oui,' 'Chic,' 'Hustler' and 'Screw.'

Now there is Vom, "busting out all over," he chuckles. A frequent visitor to Montreal — where he has engaged Gazette sports columnist Tim Burke in amazingly erudite boxing and wrestling discussions — Meltzer was contacted in Los Angeles for the inside report of rock's first avant-garde absurdist punk band.

"Our first show, at Kahuna's Bearded Clam on the Redondo Beach Pier was the most fun I've had since the days of New York press parties, before they started kicking me out for rock 'n' roll antics," he reported.

"We had our roadies dump out a large bag of garbage before the set which kind of tipped them off early and the audience started pelting us with bottles, beer, melted wax, ash trays, tables, chairs, whatever.

"At one point, just before launching into 'I Live With the Roaches,' I released 50 live crickets and that backed 'em up a good 20 feet — at least momentarily.

"At another key moment, during 'Punkmobile', I dumped a can of STP on my head. I got shocks from my microphone because of all the beer they threw.

"At one point when they were being especially appreciative, I told them that if they wanted to applaud something 'Go home and applaud Beethoven. Vom doesn't want your applause'. Great back and forth abuse the whole set through. Afterwards they made us clean up the place, gave everyone a broom.

"The other bands we played with — Shock and The Tremors — both had bigger followings than us but had to let us go on last because of what they rightly expected to happen. But they hung their heads in disbelief — we outdid them easy!

"The whole thing went beyond my wildest expectations, and I going to do it so some more, as long as it remains fun."

Meanwhile, Meltzer reports that the group went into a "dingy studio" to work on their first extended—play 45 rpm record (four songs).

Two Canadian variety shows part of CBC summer listings

RADIO & TELEVISION
By Joan Irwin

If you have the feeling that summer may never be more than a dim memory or an unattainable dream, it may come as some encouragement to learn that the CBC is certain the warm season will arrive and is planning accordingly.

The English TV network has just released its summer schedule, and though some of the details have yet to be filled in there's enough in the current information to give us an idea of what to expect.

The list includes two new Canadian-produced variety series, several imports including a sequel to last summer's 'Duchess of Duke Street,' a half hour current affairs series, and full coverage of the Commonwealth Games in August.

One of the new variety shows suffers from a cutesy-poo title guaranteed to drive editors across the country wild. It's called 'Danny's Sho•' — that's S-H-O-asterisk — which is enough to put one off before the series ever begins.

The show stars Denny Doherty, one-time member of the singing group The Mamas and the Papas, and will be produced in Halifax. Guests will include Paul Simon, Arlo Guthrie, Ryan's Fancy, and former Mamas and Papas colleagues Michelle and John Phillips.

'Duchess' back

From across the country in Vancouver will come the other Canadian variety series — 'The Raes,' starring the husband and wife singing duo of Cherril and Robbie Rae. The pair appeared on CBC-TV recently in the Juno Awards telecast and have a pop record hit 'Que Sera Sera.'

Gemma Jones will return at the beginning of June as 'The Duchess of Duke Street' in a series beginning where last summer's left off. The period covered will be 1911 to 1925, with George V on the throne and Louisa's lover married but not out of her life.

Also from Britain, this time from London Weekend, comes 'No, Honestly,' a half-hour sitcom starring the husband and wife team of John Alderton.

If the names aren't familiar, the faces will be — since the pair were both in the phenomenally successful 'Upstairs Downstairs.' He was Watkins the chauffeur and she was the maid Sarah.

In this series he's an actor and she's a member of the aristocracy, and they're married to each other. The series is based on Charlotte Bingham's novels 'Coronet Among the Weeds' and 'Coronet Among the Grass.'

Another 'Upstairs Downstairs' alumnus, Simon Williams, who played James, will be appearing in an anthology drama series from Thames Television called 'Romance.' Other stars of the romantic dramas will be Nigel Davenport and Elizabeth Shepherd.

'Chef' show

Beginning in mid-June CBC-TV will carry 'The Return of Captain Nemo' currently running in the U.S. Featured in the cast are Jose Ferrer, Burgess Meredith, Horst Bucholtz and Lynda Day George.

If you enjoyed the Thames Television series 'Man About the House' on which the leering 'Three's Company' is based, you'll want to renew acquaintance with Richard O'Sullivan who was the male star. In the new series, called 'Robin's Nest' he's a qualified but unemployed chef who wants to marry his girlfriend, played by Tessa Wyatt, who's quite happy to live with him but wants no part of anything more permanent.

In August the CBC will be covering the Commonwealth Games in much the same way it dealt with the Olympic Games — live daily telecasts from opening to closing ceremonies.

There are many more shows coming up in the summer, some in the daytime schedules and some in prime time. Returning summer series include 'This Land,' 'Comin' Up Country' with Tim Daniels and Julie Lynn, and 'V.I.P.' with Lorraine Thompson.

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There's a feast of Mozart coming up on the CBC-FM series 'Arts National' beginning next Monday (the 17th) and continuing until the middle of July. From April 17 to June 5 it will be music recorded last fall in Vancouver, and from June 12 to July 17 from the Mozart Festival held in Toronto during the winter. 'Arts National' is heard weekdays from 4:04 to 6 p.m.

WEEKEND RADIO

TODAY

9:00 a.m. (CINQ-FM) Jazz & Blues presents the 1972 Hollywood Bowl Concerts.

12:05 p.m. (CBC-FM) Touch The earth features a run down on folk festivals that will occur across Canada this summer and the pearls of folk wisdom from Birchbark Alec, a wise old man who lives in the wilds of Northern Ontario.

2:00 p.m. (CBC-AM) Metropolitan Opera features Cavalleria Rusticana, Mascagni conducted by James Levine.

8:00 p.m. (CJAD-AM) Big Country features Conway Twitty.

11:00 p.m. (CFQR-FM) Jazz Nocturne features Ella Fitzgerald, Earl "Fatha" Hines, Oscar Peterson and others.

SUNDAY

6 p.m. (CHOM-FM) Music Masters presents Steely Dan.

7:30 p.m. (CFQR-FM) Boston Pops presents music by Enesco, Mendelssohn, and Berlioz, and selections from the Jerome Kern/Oscar Hammerstein Musical Show Boat.

8:00 p.m. (CJFM-FM) Jazz 96 presents music by Charles Lloyd, Jimmy Raney, Chico Hamilton, Phil Woods and The Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

8:05 p.m. (CBC-FM) Murray Schafer documentary about this Canadian composer.

10:00 p.m. (CFQR-FM) Artists of Canada presents interviews with Joan Gordon and Kenneth Murphy of the National Arts Centre.

11:05 p.m. (CBC-AM) Friends features the music of Gilles Valiquette, Bob Marley, Jean Laporte, Buffy Sainte-Marie and Marie Claire Seguin.

11:30 p.m. (CJAD-AM) Broadway Blockbuster presents Blues classics such as "Sweet Georgia Brown," "Sophisticated Lady" as sung by the Broadway cast of "Bubbling Brown Sugar."

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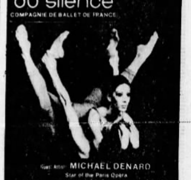
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